

key notes

A NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECREATION ASSOCIATION

Edited by Mel C. Byers, CIRA, Owens-Illinois, Inc., P.O. Box 1035, Toledo, Ohio 43601

Key Notes is designed to bring you brief notes about the latest in programming and administration in the employee services field.

July, 1975

Volume 5, No. 1

UNNEGOTIATED BENEFITS

Industrial recreation and employee services are one of a few remaining management prerogatives. They are the unnegotiated benefits that set one company ahead of another. Properly administered, there is no equal or even a close comparison to reaching the employee and developing a cooperative, understanding attitude. There is no better communicative media known than the person-to-person relationship, especially when it becomes a free exchange and communicative flow upward and downward in the organization or business.

The efforts put forth to build harmony and consideration are far more profitable than that of battle line strategies and war maneuvering. The successful history of companies providing excellent employee service programs prove the values through fewer confrontations between employee and employer, more pleasant and harmonious relationships, and a greater employee interest and concern for the product and company. The results invariably result in more profits, higher stock averages and lower administrative costs. Something to think about -- if you are unfortunate not to have this element of profit building, then do your own survey, the findings will bear us out. The key to employee services is an employee organization, call it what you may, recreation club, athletic association or employee services organization. Through the channels of this employee and employer organization the mechanics of a recreation program can be administered with success.

CONDITIONING YOUR AUDIENCE

It is easy to spot an event staged by a professional promoter. The audience is influenced by a series of emotional techniques. Starting with advertising, there is design and purpose for every expenditure and moment of time spent. Fanfare, band music, group singing, enthusiastic M.C.'s, stimulation of performers or players, cheers and applause, clever visuals, lighting and awesome decorations. The next time you watch T.V., look for the televised broadcasts that have these building blocks of audience acceptance. Some professionals can start with a skeptical and apathetic group and expertly change their attitudes within minutes.

Many a sports game has been won on sheer participant conditioning under the terminology of "a pep talk". Battles have been won by oratory and play acting of the command. One can tell what type of movie is being shown at a theatre by watching the patrons leaving. You too can influence your attendance and participation by using some of these tactics. Call it brainwashing, propaganda or fanfare, it pays off in box office receipts, television ratings, sport events, our company's sales results or even our recreation programs.

OUTSIDE HELP FOR INSIDE EVENTS

There are a number of companies interested and most willing to help make your next party a success. All they ask is the opportunity to display or demonstrate their products. A number of industrial clubs have held wine tasting parties, cheese sampling parties, sports wear shows, cooking with beer sessions, coffee hours, decorating the home courses, dressmaking sessions, salad bars, fashion shows, travel time parties, cooks and bakers schools, patio chefs expos and showers for brides and babies.

THE MONEY TREE CLUB

A service club designed for young married couples is a Money Tree Club. The program consists of ways and means to save money on all types of purchases and services. Tips and advice are given on larger expenditures. Group purchases on food products and household items can amount to a considerable savings. Some manufacturers sell discontinued or last year's models at attractive prices, but are only interested when six or more items or cartons are purchased. The group can also arrange their own entertainment specials at discount admission, etc.

"The Money Tree Club" is not only a service of savings, but also one of education and enjoyment.

IMPORTANCE OF GROUP ACTIVITIES

Group activities, the involvement of a number of people, are vital to an effective program. There are several reasons for this. Group participation results in maximizing your resources, enabling you to involve many people within a specified budget of time and money. Less obvious, but perhaps more important, group activities promote communication which helps the development of friendships, cooperation and the understanding of one another's views and feelings.

Group participation aids in building a feeling of cooperative responsibilities and efforts that carry over into the working habits of the individual. There is also an opportunity through group activities to spot leadership, a plus factor for both the participant and the management observer seeking potential supervisory personnel.

BROWN BAG NICKELODEON

A good program idea is to feature a lunch time movie series of comedies and oldies shown in a room partially lighted and arranged cafe style. Participants may be charged a nickel for admission, and should bring their own brown bag lunch or buy one at the door. Coffee and soft drinks may be served and money collected by a committee of Gibson girl hostesses.

PLAY DAY - A LAST FLING OF SUMMER FUN

Here is a list of another day of assortment of games and contests: Mom and Dad softball game - Big Daddy Horse Shoe Contest - Baldy's Badminton Play Off - Singles and Mingles Water Polo - Campus Code Ball Play - Ladies Lawn Jart and Dart Play - Family Putting Contest - Shuffleboard Contest - Singles and Doubles Tennis, etc. to conclude with a tube steak and burger poolside banquet and dance.

POLLS AND SURVEYS

Surveys or polls can be useful only when they are professionally conducted. The average committeeman, recreation director or personnel administrator doesn't have the academic background for designing, conducting or evaluating surveys or opinion polls. Even when developed and administered by professionals, there can be an element of error or an inaccuracy occurring. A recreation director in one industry sent out a questionnaire asking what sports people were interested in participating in or observing. The results indicated most persons questioned liked to watch football. He then set out to arrange for a big ten game special; he purchased tickets, chartered busses and arranged for refreshments. However, when the tickets went on sale, there were fewer takers than he expected. In fact, only one bus was used instead of three and the surplus tickets had to be peddled around town. When he went back to his people for an explanation, the answer was, you asked us if we liked to watch football? Sure, we do at home, in an easy chair, near the fireplace, watching the game on TV.

OLD-FASHIONED FEATHER PARTY

In the hey days of the neighborhood theatre, November was a time the theatre manager conducted a series of feather party performances. The numbered admission ticket had a duplicate in a raffle barrel and the drawing was held at intermission -- drawing lucky numbers for live geese, chickens, ducks and turkeys.

Some recreational organizations applied this idea to a bingo party and termed it Thanksgiving Bingo, Turkey Bingo or Feather Party. Bowling leagues adopted the idea and held Turkey Bowling contests or Feather Party bowling nights during the Thanksgiving holiday season. However, in recent years, fewer people want live fowl, therefore, some groups have made arrangements with food markets to give gift certificates. However, this does not lend to the color and atmosphere desired at party time. Feather parties can encompass many other activities and need not be confined to a raffle or bingo. It can be a Card Party, Millionaire's Night of Feathers, or Skeet, Trap and Rifle Turkey Shoot.

PRIVATE RECREATION FACILITIES ZOOMING

The demand for recreation facilities since 1972 has been so great that private enterprises have found it to be a lucrative business. There now are more private facilities dominating outdoor recreation in the U.S.A. than federal, state or local government controlled areas. The annual participation of the private operations outnumbers public recreation facilities. It is estimated that 132,000 profit oriented outdoor recreation enterprises are in existence and more being added each day. Dude ranches, shooting ranges, tennis courts, ski areas, snow mobile courses and entertainment park facilities are some of the headliners. Non-profit organizations provide another 467 million acres of land and includes some 32,000 recreational clubs programmed for their members only. These findings may indicate there may be a need for industrial recreation facility expansion and a restudy of which recreation facilities are most desired.

KEY NOTES EDITOR WELCOMES YOUR COMMENTS ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER, AND INVITES READERS TO SUBMIT NEWS ITEMS.



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September, 1975

Volume 5, No. 2

BICENTENNIAL PROGRAMS

Industrial recreation associations should become interested and active in their community Bicentennial efforts. Next year will be one of birthday celebrations for the greatest country on this planet. Now is the time for your association to plan its own programs and join community celebrations as well. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Old Glory - Do we fly it? Do we need a more prominent place? How about spotlighting it? What about carillons, patriotic music at noon and an evening hour? Do your meeting rooms, ball diamonds, etc. have a place to display the flag, and, if so, is there one on display?
2. How about one of the following events?
 - A. Red, white, and blue officers' banquet tied in with installation of new officers of your association.
 - B. Spirit of '76 dinner dance, stage show, picnic, or series of "America the Beautiful" movies.
 - C. Sports exhibitions - as they were and how they started.
 - D. Founders Day - Celebrate your association's birthday along with our country's and honor past presidents, etc.
 - E. Bicentennial celebration of progress - our country and our company.

ANOTHER ROUND WITH INFLATION

Regardless of the blue skies of our economy peeping through, there is indication of increased costs looming on the horizon. Industrial recreation and employee service programmers should be prepared. Seek ways now to purchase in larger quantities and at opportune times. Contact other associations and work out mutual purchasing procedures. Condition the employee members for sharing the costs a wee bit more. Stop playing the welfare role and "big daddy" games, it's time all of us pitched in and gave more of our cash and our surplus efforts. Don't use last year's budget figures to estimate your next year's budget, and maybe you should take another look at how you do your banking - what

advantages are there in six month bank notes, etc. Can you increase your income through new methods of selling? There could be advance sales - prize offers - discounts and group sales. Last, but not to be overlooked, how about cutting your costs? Do you really need all that heat, all that light, or that 12-piece band? Uniforms can be worn longer with some loving care, and a few less ounces of T-bone may do wonders for budget and figures.

ICE SKATING

One of the finest family activities to offer is ice skating. If you are fortunate enough to have an ice skating arena in your community which can be rented, there is no equal especially when there is free spectator admission. Many who come to look often get the urge to give it a try. There should always be one section roped off for beginners with a good instructor to encourage the timid - both young and old. If there is no community arena, there have been remarkable advances made in the manufacturing of plastic ice skating rinks - some portable. The surfaces are not as slick as ice, therefore a bit slower, but for family fun and enjoyment, they are excellent.

Family tickets can be sold in advance by the book at discount over individual sales of tickets. A P.A. system and some good recordings or tapes will add to the event. Be sure to have a couple of ice guards or safety attendants, plus a good announcer to keep the ice skating party a fun affair.

DECORATING THE HALL CAN BE EXPENSIVE

Decorations do lend to the atmosphere of the event, but there are a few guidelines to follow, unless there are unlimited funds for the decoration committee to spend. Depending upon the size of the room or hall, decorations must coincide with the size of the room.

1. A small room can accomodate only smaller decorations like table pieces, small streamers with fewer large displays.
2. Large areas require large expansive decorations, larger and wider streamers, big displays, and a large table centerpiece, rather than dozens of small ones.
3. Balloons are less expensive hangings for large areas and add considerable color. Large wall hangings made of wrapping paper or from cardboard boxes with splashes of color can be most effective and quite inexpensive.
4. Decorate the most important focal points first, like the band stand, head table area, entrances, and staging areas. These may be all that is necessary.

5. Use lights to your advantage - never too bright and not too dark. Use of red and yellow lights adds a feeling of warmth; use of greens and blues makes a feeling of eeriness, mystery and coolness; ambers and yellows are used with reds, blues, and greens to soften the harshness of the warm and cold colored lighting. White light is for attraction and visibility, and should be used for activities requiring complete viewing and clarity.

WHEN THE TOUR IS OVER

If you have had a group tour to Hawaii, Europe or elsewhere, soon after there may be a request to see slides, movies, photos, etc. A party for the participants should be held with each allotted 10 to 15 of their best slides and with one projectionist. Movies must be limited to a half hour and photos should be in book or carded form for display. Although some friends may be interested (up to a degree of tolerance) in pictures of the tour, the greatest appreciation is from those who were there and more so by those who took them. This little limerick may sum up our case for the unfortunate guests.

I have never been to Europe
But I know it end to end
I have had to view colored slides
Of every traveled friend.

ONE GROUP OF PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATORS' VIEWS

Twenty-one Personnel Administrators of one major company were asked to judge personnel activities as to their importance and which ones they would eliminate first if a choice were to be made. The results were rather shocking, but perhaps reflect a lack of training, experience or properly administered and promoted programs. First on the list to do were open house and group tours; second, personnel research; third, monthly reports; fourth, bulletin boards and employee information; sixth, personnel recruitment. However, industrial recreation was 13th on the list of 15 activities considered to be of average importance. Labor relations and medical services were the last they would choose to eliminate in the total list of functions recorded.

SOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT NOISE

At the rate we are going, it will be no wonder if a generation from now everyone will have some sort of a hearing problem. It is unfortunate that so many new items and programs for fun are very big in producing harmful noise - trail bikes, motorcycles, dune buggies,

snowmobiles, amplified music. All seem hell-bent on shattering the ear drums. Wouldn't it be a blessing to have a quiet zone for a change! Here are a few average decibel readings that most people encounter.

Normal breathing	10 decibels
Whispering	20 decibels
School Library	60 decibels
Automobiles	70 decibels
Radio	78 decibels
Shower	78 decibels
Basketball Game	90 decibels
Motorcycle or Snowmobile	120 decibels
Amplified Rock Music	130 decibels

Noise damages ears at 85 decibels, and efficiency goes down at 90. Hearing loss can begin when the noise level tops 100 decibels with actual pain being felt at 140 decibels.

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR N.I.R.A. SERVICES

The National Industrial Recreation Association is most concerned about your company or organization membership. The Association was formed because of a real need, a source of information. Today N.I.R.A. is offering more benefits than most professional organizations but the Board of Directors wants to see more services and assistance given. If you have suggestions concerning further services N.I.R.A. can offer, please address your letter directly to President William DeCarlo, Xerox Corporation, Xerox Square, Rochester, New York 14604. If you have any constructive criticisms of N.I.R.A. include them in your communication. If you haven't the time to write, phone Bill - his number is (716) 423-3196. If you appreciate and enjoy N.I.R.A.'s membership, tell other companies about the organization and offer to sponsor their membership.

FISHING CONTEST DEADLINE DECEMBER 1

Don't forget to get your entry forms in for the 1975 NIRA fishing contest. Gene Miller, Tournament Coordinator from Michigan Bell Telephone, reports that participation has been fantastic. So, please get your entry forms in as soon as possible so your employees can participate in this year's tournament.

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20 N. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60606

Notes on the latest in programming and administration in the employee services field
Edited by CIRA's Mel and Martha Byers, 2751 Inwood Drive, Toledo, Ohio 43606

October, 1975

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KEEP YOUR MEMBERS INFORMED

There is no such thing as over-promoting. The greatest problem we face is the lack of sufficient promotion and communication. One announcement is never enough--one medium to relay a message is never enough. The cost of promotion is the best investment you organization can make in employee services. Unfortunately, however, it suffers first when any austerity plan is launched. Usually, little or no effort is made to prevent the cut--primarily because there is little concrete evidence to support the value of good publicity. Begin now to tabulate you promotion effectiveness. Use return forms to determine results. Show the relationship of costs in promotion to success or failure of events, especially for those programs which may cost more to produce. We say that if the program or event is worth offering, then it certainly is worth as much effort to promote. Would it not seem foolish to terminate all the salesmen and stop all advertising only to have no customers?

TRAVEL IS NOW THE WORD

Because of the anticipated rise in the cost of fuel, people are taking to the highways for the "last fling" of a 2,000- to 4,000-mile vacation. A recent survey showed a 7.1% increase in this category of travel over the last year. Camper-trucks and travel trailers are the transportation and accommodation choices of the largest group of respondents. As the cost of travel continues to rise, some travelers make adjustments in their travel plans--such as choosing one long trip rather than several short ones. Others make up fuel costs by furnishing their own overnight facilities or arranging to stay with friends. Still others cut their expenses by seeking lower-cost motel accommodations, forgoing expensive meals, packing their own food, and using camping facilities. According to the survey, last summer was also a boon for nearby attractions those close to travelers' homes, an indication that not everyone has taken the long trips. Already, the "See America First" (by bus) campaign has lured many who might have used the family car for extended trips. We see group travel at home and abroad as a savings benefit and splendid service to offer employees.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE

In every community, there is some old run-down vacant house that is ready for destruction. A service club in one city rented such a property for one month in October, turned it into a haunted house of horrors, and opened it to the public for one week prior to Halloween. A conducted tour through the house cost one dollar for adults and fifty cents for children. Ghosts, skeletons, black cats, witches and brews, spiders on strings, coffins and rattling chains, wierd music, screams, and villainous laughs made the trip a spine tingler. It also attracted considerable attention and became one of the best fund raisers the club had ever promoted.

SATURDAY MORNING JUNIOR BOWLING LEAGUES

Bowling leagues for the small fry offer a great way to involve the entire family in employee recreation. You might want to divide competition into two leagues. Both boys and girls could participate in the two leagues: a Pony league for children aged 5 through 8 years, and a Thoroughbred league for children from 9 to 12. Bowling could start conveniently at 10:00 a.m. and end at noon. Parents could act as scorekeepers and coaches. On holidays, special bowling events such as a Turkey Bowl, Rudolf Prize Bowl, or Candy Cane Bowl, could be planned. Teams could be named after horses: Mustangs, Colts, Pintos, etc. An end-of-season awards event could be staged around a western theme or round-up jubilee. All participants could receive western bowling novelties and bowling participation attendance trophies, plaques, or certificates.

COUNTRY FAIR PARTY

This can be a fun packed event for an unlimited number of participants. A large hall, barn, or open-sided shelter can be set up to house a pet show and judging: pie and cake judging; home canned goods; crafts and hobbies displays; a country music sing-along and side show; a sewing contest; a hamburger, hot dog, and ice cream stand; a red pop and candy apples booth; and more. The master of ceremonies can be called the Country Fair Commissioner. Committee chairmen might be given such titles as Commissioner of Pets and Livestock, Commissioner of Farm Produce, and so forth. Talent from the organization, such as dancers, singers, musicians, magicians, artists, and models can make up the side show attractions. A dance combo offering both round and square dancing can be another fine addition. A fireworks display, if permitted, can climax the evening. Members pruchasing tickets to the Country Fair may win or purchase garden produce, home baked goods, jellies, handy-work items, and may even win blue ribbons for "Best Hog Caller," "Best Bean or Pea Picker," etc.

SPORTS LAUGH-IN--Or, Have This One On Me

During the sports seasons, various players develop special traits, overemphasize their abilities, lose bets, etc. A year-end banquet or outing can be designed to offer impersonations of these players and invite the audience to guess who's who. It can really be an evening

of fun if properly scripted and conducted. Funny awards may be presented. An annual traveling comic trophy can be presented to the team making the biggest boo-boo.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Volunteer posts such as serving on a committee, chairing an event, managing a team, being a secretary for an association, or being elected to its presidency provide opportunities to exercise and practice leadership techniques. They also provide management with a chance to observe those who show promise as administrators and supervisors. They set new goals for training and recording procedures by the personnel department. One of the greatest obstacles to overcome in working with volunteer leaders can best be summed up in a statement by Lyman Bryson: "The error of youth is to believe intelligence is a substitute for experience; while the error of age is to believe that experience is a substitute for intelligence." Working with volunteers of all ages, experiences, and levels of intelligence is not a bed of roses. The man or woman who can continue to recruit volunteers, develop leaders, and create a harmonious relationship between leaders and participants can be credited as a personnel professional.

CRITICS WITHOUT CREDENTIALS

Every so often we pick up a newspaper or magazine and encounter another harebrained article giving the public the wrong impression of our industrial recreation programs. The following excerpt from a syndicated news release which appeared in a Florida newspaper is an example.

"Office picnics are larger and more dangerous than domestic ones. They offer beer, bologna, and softball instead of potato salad, and feature a lot of messing around between married men and girls from the typist pool. Sort of a Christmas office party with flies. What if you are in a factory? The same rules apply. The only difference between office and factory (or union) picnics is that at the office picnic the boss makes a funny talk and nobody laughs whereas at the union picnic the local president makes a serious talk and everybody laughs. The union picnic features loud talk and clumsy footwork by two foremen who have eyes for the blond from the stock room."

This may have brought forth a few laughs and earned the writer a reputation as a comic, but the unsuspecting public takes every word to be gospel truth and we, as industrial recreation administrators, suffer an undeserved whiplash.

CHILDREN'S IMAGINATIVE SHOW IS VISUAL EDUCATION

John Burstein plays the Pied Piper of physical fitness to thousands of young school children in his role of Mr. Slim Goodbody. A one-man show, he wears a painted body suit illustrating all the body's vital organs on the front and the backbone on the back. With banjo, guitar,

and harmonica, he sings a hymn to the heart ("Eighty beats a minute--without it you will die") and does other show numbers like "Down, down goes your food... ribs go around your chest to form a vest... your mouth is a house and your teeth live inside..." Further information may be obtained by writing John Burstein, 46 Walker St., New York, NY 10003. (212) 966-5615.

MOVIES AVAILABLE

New films are available on the causes and prevention of typical ski injuries. Contact Johnson & Johnson Company, New Brunswick, New Jersey. A separate film, "Focus on Ability", is a teaching aid for handicapped individuals wishing to participate in water activities. It may be purchased for \$74--some prints are available on loan from the American Red Cross.

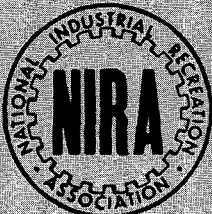
GOOD WINTER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

When two people meet for the first time, their conversation usually begins with, "What do you do?" or "What's your occupation?" We note that three interest factors usually are advanced in most introductory meetings and often thereafter. First are the personal or self-interest items: a sport, a news event, an item of clothing, etc. Second, families are discussed: children, wives, husbands. Third, jobs or occupations enter the conversation.

Some very entertaining employee programs can be developed to play upon these basic interests. One company activities program involves an "Account of Your Company" series. Tickets are sold for individual dinners. Each program is free and introduces a different aspect of the company's interest and manufacturing. Topics include "What is a comptroller and what does he or she do?" and "What is marketing and what do we do with it?" Such programs, delivered well and in a limited time, can broaden the employee's company information and education. Programs of this kind should be open to the wives and husbands of employees since they, too, are anxious to know more about the company from which at least part of their income is derived.

HELP! Can NIRA be one of your volunteer workers? As a NIRA member, you have available many sources of help and information for both you and your organization. We enjoy talking with members and are pleased to be of service. Give us a call--it's quicker than writing and waiting for an answer, however prompt. Just ask for program services. (312) 346-7575.

SEE YOU AT THE 35th ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBIT
MAY 21-26 IN MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN



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November, 1975

Volume 5, No. 4

MORE THAN FUN & GAMES

Your industrial recreation association brings warmth and cordiality to the job. It may prove to be the important factor in creating an enthusiastic, cooperative work force. Those companies whose management people support employee associations benefit in numerous ways, as do the employees who enjoy the recreational and service opportunities provided for them and their families. Such benefits have lightened the day-to-day routine of labor. The employee cannot avoid crediting the company for these unnegotiated benefits. Although it may prove difficult to measure accurately the effectiveness of your contribution to good human relations, many employees know--as should management--that your services are largely responsible for employees' good will toward the company.

OUR SERVICES AS P.R.--BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE COMPANY

Under the auspices of your recreation association, employee services can flourish and grow to provide a growing variety of employee benefits. Services attract more personnel than most single recreational events and often cost less to provide. The need for one, however, goes hand-in-hand with the other. Recreation and services are inseparable.

Services such as discounts, sports and recreational tickets, merchandise, travel packages, educational activities, vacation bargains, and involvement in community projects not only stretch the employee's dollar, but also expose him or her to new interests and skills. Often, a service instigates an activity new to the recreation program. In one company, for example, discount season tickets were offered for a community little theatre and soon after a theatre guild was started. When the recreation association handles such services, the company is not committing itself to guarantees or obligations. The members assist in handling a number of the services on their own time at little or no expense to the company. Those services which do require paid company time from your staff also provide the personal contact with many employees which is so essential to good personnel administration. The recreation association also provides an excellent opportunity for management to involve the employees in community drives and interests. This gives a real assist to public relations with enthusiastic results.

The following list--basic but not comprehensive--mentions services that are being offered in many companies:

Company products	In-house instruction including languages,
Merchandise discounts	leadership, speaking
Auto license plate services	Refresher courses including
Hunting, fishing license services	English, math, business
Volunteer community services	Equipment for loan including
Blood banks	convalescent items, tools
Income tax service	Notary service
Parking lot	Emergency relief
services including towing	Reference libraries
and jumping aid	Medicare and Medicaid
On-site sports instruction	counseling
Social Security help and	
information	

Services such as these make the difference between one place of employment and another. They bring such unsolicited comments in the community as, "Now there is a good place to work. They do so much for their employees."

A CHRISTMAS GREETING ASSIST

With the high cost of postage and printing, more and more people are finding ways to cut down on their mailings of Christmas cards. One recreation association made a study of the cards exchanged between employees and came up with a splendid idea. A large, 4X6-foot Christmas card was displayed in the main lobby. Any employee could have his or her name added to the card for 50¢. The greeting stated that the money received would go to a community fund for food and clothing of the needy. The response was great and the money received was greatly appreciated by the charitable agencies.

Another company offered a similar program. Its employee services department accepted unlimited donations, each earmarked for employees' favorite charities, and printed all contributors' names in a Holiday Greetings card in the company newspaper. The following issue of the newspaper printed letters of thanks from the charities which received the donations.

INDUSTRIAL RECREATION: THE PRE-RETIREMENT CONDITIONER

Telling a person at age 63 to take up golf as a retirement occupation may be futile. If there had been a good recreation program established in the company during the retiree's younger years, there would have been efforts put forth to get everyone involved in something. That "something" learned early in the employment stage carries on through retirement. One director, when asked if he had a pre-retirement program, pointed to the recreation association and said, "They do the job, starting the very day an applicant is hired."

The recreation association should provide enough activities that choices can be made. Lectures and informative programs concerning services should be offered to explain Social Security, Medicare, company retirement benefits, etc.--not once, but throughout the years. They should be geared to people in their teens, twenties, thirties,

and older. All should be designed with both a short and long range goal in mind. One employee club boasts of the number of retirees who are painting in oils, some so proficiently that their hobby has resulted in an income enterprise. This rewarding accomplishment was the result of an art club started many years previously. Lessons offered in furniture refinishing, ceramics, and other interesting and profitable hobbies should be continuously scheduled by companies which can afford them.

Another service idea that is possible to realize is a counselor who is knowledgeable in all aspects of company benefits and who is available to all employees. Not only will the counselor be interested in employees over 50, but he or she will also seek information to pass on to the recreation association for early-age involvement in activities and interests which can carry over to the retirement years. A small job clinic or retirement employment program is another valuable service which could be coordinated by the counselor and would benefit everyone.

A MUCH DESIRED PROGRAM FOR TEENAGERS

There seem to be sufficient active recreational opportunities for teenagers. We find, however, that there is a strong desire on their part to learn more about job opportunities and careers. Industry can offer considerable assistance in this field of vocational and career guidance. Programs providing explanations of various occupations--the pluses and minuses of the jobs, as well as the future needs and salary ranges for them--can be outlined by industrial department supervisors in a series of "Here's How It Is" seminars. Free copies of "25 Technical Careers You Can Learn in Two Years or Less" could be distributed. These booklets, prepared by the U. S. Office of Education, are distributed free by Careers, Washington, D. C. 20202 and can serve as a supplement to the program.

One group conducting a trial run of this type of program met with thirty teenagers and passed out sheets of plain 8½X11-inch paper. The participants stated the occupations in which they were interested, then listed all the pluses for choosing the field and then listed all the disagreeable factors they felt might be encountered. They concluded with the salary ranges they believed were offered for those jobs. At subsequent meetings, men and women in the various fields which were listed by the teens followed the same exercise for the group on a blackboard. The participants scored themselves on the correctness of their evaluations. After the sessions, participants had the opportunity to meet and discuss their interests with people who were actually performing those jobs.

THE RECREATIONAL LOCK-OUT

The recreation administrator often encounters a recreational lock-out and may not even be aware of it. In many activities, there comes a time when the participants of long exposure become quite proficient or skilled in their performances. It is then that a sort of professionalism creeps into the program and destroys the opportunities for beginners. As an example, when a square dance group is organized, most participants are novices and the learning process is

pretty universal. As they progress, they may become annoyed by those who join late and have difficulty in picking up the basics already taught. The newcomers are discouraged, sometimes ignored and, of course, drop out. Later may come a time when an element of the group becomes very skilled and advances into more professional performances. With this comes specialized clothing, western gear, hats, dresses, boots--an outlay that could exceed \$200 per couple. Before long, the group disintegrates into a handful of exclusive dancers and the general participation and fun no longer exist. This kind of lock-out can take place in just about any type of activity and the recreation director must have a remedy ready when it occurs.

For advanced participants, we suggest advanced classes, semi-pro groups or teams, or even reference to community groups catering to the semi-professionals. We, as industrial recreation leaders, are interested first and foremost in total involvement. It is our goal to have many teams and special interest groups, regardless of their abilities to perform. Of course, we must spread our finances to serve this purpose and to attract many more employees.

(Dale Prell, Recreation Manager for Oscar Mayer and Company, discusses this same problem in his article, "Increasing participation: How to catch employee interest--and keep it," in the October issue of RECREATION MANAGEMENT.)

DON'T FORGET!

LOCAL RESULTS FOR THE 1975 NIRA DUPLICATE BRIDGE TOURNAMENT
ARE DUE DEC. 4, 1975. SEND THEM TO TOURNAMENT CHAIRMAN
JACK RILEY, GENERAL DYNAMICS CONVAIR RECREATION ASSOCIATION,
9115 CLAREMONT MESA BLVD., SAN DIEGO, CALIF. 92123.



key notes

A NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECREATION ASSOCIATION
20 N. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60606

Notes on the latest in programming and administration in the employee services field
Edited by CIRA's Mel and Martha Byers, 2751 Inwood Drive, Toledo, Ohio 43606

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USIA OFFERS FULL PROGRAM

The USIA-State Recreation Association is a group of U.S. State Department employees and their families. It also offers friends of members the opportunity to become affiliate members of the Association, a unique idea to industrial recreation administration. The USIA-State Association is unique in itself, however, providing a full recreational program, plus one of the most complete service organizations we have encountered. The Association has four divisions: merchandising, housing, recreation, and travel. Its broad range of activities provides membership benefits most difficult to match in any segment of employment elsewhere. Bert Knitter, Recreation Programmer, would like to establish an exchange of program information. Write him: State-USIA Recreation Association, Inc., Room 2928, State Department Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20520. Ask for a copy of "The State-USIA Recreation Association" booklet. It is outstanding.

DUCKPIN BOWLING LEAGUE

The Duckpin Bowling League of the USIA-State Recreation Association offers members an opportunity to participate in nationally sanctioned league competition. The eight-team mixed league meets one evening a week between Labor Day and early May. The league season is divided into two halves with the winning team of each half meeting in a rolloff for championship at season's end. Bowlers contribute to a common fund for the purchase of awards to be given on sweepstakes night to individuals with high games. Besides the sweepstakes night, an annual tournament and awards banquet is held each spring. For more information on setting up a Duckpin Bowling League, contact Bert Knitter, Recreation Programmer, USIA-State Recreation Association, Inc., Room 2928, State Department Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20520.

HOLD AN AUCTION AND MAKE MONEY

Everyone has some unused item that is too good to throw away. One day each spring or fall, the recreation association can put such "cast off" merchandise to good use in a membership participation

auction. Items entered must have price tags listing the lowest dollar value desired and the owner's name. Once the item is auctioned off, the tag is marked with the price received and name of the purchaser, then handed to a cashier who collects the amount and drops the tag in a box for final payment distribution. In one company, management also offered company surplus items and used equipment such as furniture for auction. Good publicity in advance of the sale encourages employees to take part in selling and buying, and to invite their families and friends to attend. A 20% or greater commission is received by the association on all items sold. If the money received can be designated for a specific activity or program, it helps in stimulating the employee members' interest to participate. No exchanges or refunds should be given and no items should be guaranteed. All sales must be final, with purchases taken as is. This can be one of the most fun and profitable activities offered all year. Some items may not be auctioned, but priced to sell quickly and displayed on tables, super market style, with a cashier at the exit. A good name for entire activity is "The Sale Barn."

65 AND STILL RUNNING

If a physical fitness program is offered, be sure it appeals to all ages of both men and women. Once an employee becomes interested in the program, keep that interest alive by giving as much personal attention as possible, and altering the program occasionally to change the pace. Offer variety and incorporate games, competition, challenges, and goals. To encourage older folks who may well need a fitness program, start with activities that will most likely be accepted readily. Try a walking group or a bicycle excursion for older participants. Schedule "stop and go" walking tours around town with points of interest to visit. If the older employee has been active in sports and physical fitness programs for many preceding years, he or she will usually continue to take part in such activities. A good director can help active seniors fit into a realistic program geared to their age and their capabilities. Industrial retiree clubs should definitely plan activities that keep participants on the move and mentally occupied. Some other activities that may be considered for the older participants' physical and mental fitness programs are: gardening, small job clinics, bowling, golf, tennis, fishing and hunting trips, yard and lawn service, and morning swim and breakfast clubs.

HELPING EACH OTHER SUCCEED

NIRA can boast of having one of the most congenial and cooperative memberships in U.S. industry. When a member wants to learn about a particular program or administrative procedure of another member's association, a helping and willing hand is extended. The membership directory serves as a ready reference guide. Those listed are more than pleased to assist you, answer a question, or exchange ideas. Even tough business competitors are willing to let their competition have the benefits of their employee recreation and services information. You can't knock this kind of support.

HIGH CRIME RATES STIMULATE PROTECTION PROGRAMS

In the past, there was little or no need to learn much about personal and property security; an ordinary skeleton key was sufficient. One could carry cash without too great a risk. The picture has changed drastically in so many communities, though, that people now want to know more about defending themselves, their families, and their homes. What are the laws and what protective rights does one have? What are the techniques of thwarting rape, avoiding mugging, and safe-guarding your family? Some local, county, and state police departments are most willing to provide instructors and lectures on crime and its prevention. A local locksmith can explain and demonstrate the effectiveness of various locks. The local chapter of the Bar Association can provide legal interpretations and knowledge concerning civilian rights. Some YMCA and YWCA organizations have self-defense classes. Check with them regarding your program requirements. If you have a plant or company security administrator, ask him or her to help form the program. Wherever programs of this kind have been offered, they have been fully attended or over-subscribed so be prepared to handle a capacity crowd for any such program.

SOME ACTIVITY COSTS MUST BE SHARED BY PARTICIPANTS

Today we must provide more employee activities and services than were offered only a few years ago. The number of recreational interests among all employees has doubled and tripled in a very short span of time. We feel this growth of interest and participation may be attributed to four factors: (1) greater exposure to various hobbies, sports, and entertainment via radio, TV, and the news media; (2) a much more diversified recreational program offered in all educational institutions; (3) the ease of travel; and (4) the availability of many more commercial and government recreational facilities. With this expansion also come increased costs for some activities which are far too expensive to provide free. One example of this situation may be children's hockey. Many recreation association parents feel that much of the expense, if not all, for a kids' hockey program should be absorbed by the association. The absolute must in wardrobe, equipment, and supplies can easily reach \$150 per participant. Gloves cost \$4.75 to \$40; shoulder pads, \$7.50 to \$12; elbow pads, \$4 to \$6; shin guards, \$4.50 to \$12; garters, \$3 to \$4.50; suspenders, \$3; jersey, \$9.75; pants, \$12; stockings, \$5.50; helmet, \$12.50 to \$18; mouth guard, \$12; hockey stick, \$3.75 to \$7.75; equipment bag, \$5 to \$10; and the puck will cost \$1.00. In the beginning, when only two or three activities were offered, the tendency for associations to pick up the whole tab was a common occurrence. Now, it becomes difficult to charge for the things that perhaps should never have been given freely in the beginning. Only by full participation of officers, managers, and staff in budget planning can some realization of a fair distribution of funds be made and a reasonable participants' fee or cost obligation be established.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY ENTERTAINMENT

The high cost of some give-away programs such as children's Christmas parties, for which toys, refreshments, entertainment, and hall rentals are required, can nearly bankrupt a treasury. Some savings areas that might be considered without disrupting the holiday image are being initiated by various employee associations this year. These companies are creating their own childrens' entertainment, using ideas easily copied from such TV programs as Sesame Street and Captain Kangaroo. They are also using recorded childrens' stories and songs, pantomimed by performing adults. Some creative companies will realize a savings of \$350 to \$500 per show on entertainment alone. Eliminating the refreshments, which most parents are more than pleased to have omitted, will also save a bundle. Selecting toys or gifts early in the year when surplus and warehouse leftover toys can be obtained at one third or more off the original cost can also save a few dollars. If your community has a zoo with hall, theatre, or assembly area, check out its reservation possibilities. Holding a Christmas party at the zoo is like two parties in one for the kids. Write for a copy of "Children's Christmas Parties" from NIRA. It contains many money saving ideas you can try. Check with other NIRA Association members as to what they are doing this year to keep cost down and you'll be surprised how willing and anxious they are to help you.

For regular updates on NIRA tournaments and services
watch for the new monthly column "Tournament News"
by Steve Waltz, NIRA V.P. of Tournaments & Services,
beginning in the December/January issue of RECREATION MANAGEMENT Magazine